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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05
L-03 INR-07 CIAE-00 PRS-01 COME-00 H-01 /064 W
----------050215Z 128118 /12
R 041450Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5567
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1201

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR ETRD RA ZA
SUBJ: ZAMBIA TO SUE OIL COMPANIES

REF: LUSAKA 1182, 1185

1. GRZ ATTORNEY GENERAL MAINZA CHONA DEPARTED LUSAKA MAY 2 FOR LONDON IN "HOT PURSUIT" OF THE OIL COMPANIES INVOLVED IN VIOLATING RHODESIAN OIL SANCTIONS. CHONA IS TO CONFER WITH ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT SOLICITORS, FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS, AND LONRHO CHIEF EXECUTIVE, TINY ROWLAND. PRESIDENT KAUNDA ANNOUNCED AT A MAY DAY SPEECH THAT CHONA WOULD PURSUE THE CASE IN LONDON DESPITE THE INVESTIGATION BEING LAUNCHED BY BRITISH AUTHORITIES. HE ASKED THAT ZAMBIAN WORKERS AT MULTI-NATIONAL OIL COMPANIES NOT "MOLEST" EXPATRIATE EMPLOYEES OF THESE FIRMS.

2. CHONA'S PUBLIC REMARKS ON HIS DEPARTURE MENTIONED BOTH THE CONSPIRACY ACTION (LUSAKA'S REFTELS) AND THE BREACH OF CONTRACT SUIT INVOLVING LONRHO'S PIPELINE. HE DID NOT SPEC-IFICALLY MENTION THE BREACH OF CONTRACT CIVIL SUIT ALLEGING THAT THE OIL COMPANIES FAILED TO SUPPLY ZAMBIA WITH THE CONTRACTED DEMAND.

3. BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE, CHONA CALLED BOTH THE AMBASSADOR
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AND UK HIGH COMMISSIONER TO EXPLAIN THAT GRZ ACTION SHOULD NOT BE MISUNDERSTOOD BY THE MULTINATIONAL OIL COMPANIES. ZAMBIA WAS INITIATING A CIVIL, NOT CRIMINAL, ACTION. IT SHOULD NOT REFLECT IN ANY WAY ON CONTINUED COOPERATION WITH THESE COMPANIES WITHIN ZAMBIA. CHONA SAID THAT THE ACTION WAS BEING TAKEN IN PART TO "ASSIST" THE BRITISH IN BRINGING DOWN THE ILLEGAL SMITH REGIME IN RHODESIA THROUGH PRESSURE TO TIGHTEN

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UP THE SANCTION.

COMMENT: ZAMBIA RECOGNIZES ITS OWN VULNERABILITY AND NEED FOR CONTINUED FINANCIAL SYMPATHY FROM MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS. IT CLEARLY DOES NOT WANT TO SCARE OFF THE MULTINATIONALS OR CUT OFF THE TRICKLE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT IT NOW RECEIVES. THE MESSAGE FROM CHONA WAS CLEAR AND STRAIGHTFORWARD. ZAMBIA WISHES TO MAXIMIZE PRESSURE ON THE SMITH GOVERNMENT IN ANY WAY IT CAN. IT TREATS THIS AS SEPARATE FROM THE DESIRE FOR A BASIS FOR COOPERATION IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD WITH MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO CAPITAL FLOWS. ZAMBIA IS AWARE THAT THIS COOPERATION WILL BE IMPORTANT PARTICULARLY IN THE PERIOD FOLLOWING RHODESIAN INDEPENDENCE.
LOW

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Subject: ZAMBIA TO SUE OIL COMPANIES
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